



# GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES

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## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DPNR AND FRIENDS OF EASTEND MARINE PARK TO HOST SEAGRASS PATROL**

Commissioner Jean-Pierre L. Oriol of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources announces that the Division of Coastal Zone Management in collaboration with *Friends of the St. Croix East End Marine Park* will host an educational session on Seagrass Patrol on Friday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at the St. Croix Yacht Club in Teague Bay from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The Seagrass Patrol is a citizen science program that will provide participants with a hands-on experience to learn about the inhabitants of seagrass meadows which are often overlooked. St. Croix East End Marine Park (STXEEMP) staff will assist participants with seine deployment, and the removal, identification, measuring, and safe release of organisms caught in the net. Basic water sampling parameters such as salinity and pH are also collected.

This is a free educational event, held quarterly, and suitable for all ages and experience levels. Due to COVID-19 social distancing practices, space is limited, and RSVP is required. For program inquiries and reservations please email East End Marine Park Outreach Coordinator Kelcie Troutman at [kelcie.troutman@dpr.vi.gov](mailto:kelcie.troutman@dpr.vi.gov).

This work is conducted under a scientific permit issued by the Division of Fish & Wildlife (DFW19059X) for the use of the seine. The Department reminds the public that fishing is restricted in the East End Marine Park [12 VIC§98] and that seines are considered commercial fishing gear in the territory: unless permitted separately, their use is restricted to licensed commercial fishers [12 VIC§312(k)]. The program is supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Program.